



CFTPA

*Representing television, film
and interactive production in Canada*

ACPFT

*Porte-parole de l'industrie de la production
cinématographique, télévisuelle et interactive au Canada*

**Remarks by the
Canadian Film and Television
Production Association (CFTPA)**

to

**House of Commons
Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage**

**Study on the Role for a
Public Broadcaster in the 21st Century**

April 26, 2007

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Guy Mayson

Good morning Mr. Chair and Members of the Standing Committee. My name is **Guy Mayson** and I'm the President and CEO of the Canadian Film and Television Production Association (CFTPA). With me today is **Mario Mota**, the association's Senior Director of Broadcast Relations and Research.

We applaud the Standing Committee for initiating this review and for giving us the chance to share our views about the critical importance of Canada's national public broadcaster to the continued existence of the Canadian independent television production industry.

The CFTPA represents the interests of almost 400 companies engaged in the production and distribution of English-language television programs, feature films, and interactive media products in all regions of Canada. Our member companies are significant employers of Canadian creative talent and assume the financial and creative risk of developing original content for Canadian and international audiences.

What exactly is it that producers do? We develop projects, structure the financing, hire the creative talent and crews to help turn stories into programs,

control the exploitation of the rights, and deliver the finished product. We create high-quality programming in the financially risky genres of drama, comedy, documentary, children's and youth, and performance programming – what the CRTC calls “priority programming” – providing diversity to the Canadian broadcasting system. We also create feature films for theatrical release and content for new digital platforms. Independent producers provide Canadian television viewers with a Canadian perspective on our country, our world, and our place in it. As such, the independent production sector plays a vital role in the Canadian broadcasting system, as recognized in the *Broadcasting Act*.

We want to leave plenty of time for your questions so we'll just summarize some of the key points made in our written submission to the Standing Committee.

- CBC/SRC is an essential component of the Canadian broadcasting system and to the success and viability of Canadian independent producers. Because CBC Television is the most important outlet for Canadian television programs, and because independent producers create programs in the drama, comedy, documentary, children's and youth, and

performance genres that make up an important part of CBC Television's schedule, the relationship between producers and CBC Television is symbiotic.

- The CFTPA believes that CBC Television has done a relatively good job of fulfilling its mandate in the face of considerable financial and competitive challenges. In our view, CBC Television continues to deliver a valuable service to Canadians. It plays a vital role as a domestic showcase for high-quality, distinctively Canadian television programs. But we believe CBC Television should do more.
- In recent years, a combination of reduced public funding, cost increases, and increased competition and audience fragmentation has made CBC Television more reliant on commercial revenues. This has inevitably forced it to compromise on some aspects of its important mandate.
- To be successful in achieving its essential public service mandate, and to do more, the CFTPA believes that CBC/SRC requires adequate, long-term public funding. In these times of healthy budget surpluses, we believe that the Canadian government should be re-investing in cultural institutions such as CBC/SRC.

Mario Mota

- In our view, in today's rapidly evolving broadcasting and communications environment in which there is a constant proliferation of media choices available to Canadians, the need for a national public broadcaster that showcases almost 100% Canadian content on multiple platforms including new media platforms is more important than ever.
- We believe the role for CBC/SRC in the 21st century should be different from commercial broadcasters. It should not simply offer programs that can achieve the largest audience in competition with private broadcasters but instead offer high-quality, distinctive Canadian programming that would not otherwise find a broadcast outlet. CBC Television must make a greater commitment to Canadian drama, documentary, children's and youth, and performance programming, as well as Canadian theatrical feature films. CBC/SRC should also fully embrace new media.
- Accordingly, we believe that CBC/SRC's mandate should be more explicitly defined to reflect these requirements. We believe that Canada's national public broadcaster should be subject to regular reviews of its role and mandate to ensure that it remains relevant to Canadians as the broadcasting and communications environment changes.

- The CFTPA believes that CBC Television's commitment to high-quality Canadian content should be realized through a strengthened relationship with the independent production sector. CBC Television should be a model for all other broadcasters in its dealings with independent producers. It should engage in fair and equitable business practices with respect to contract terms such as paying adequate licence fees, not requiring unduly lengthy licence agreements, and equitably sharing in rights exploitation.
- A proper funding model for the creation of independently produced Canadian programming is central to the growth and sustainability of the independent production sector. In our view, CBC Television, through fair and equitable Terms of Trade, should be playing a lead role in furthering this objective.

Thank you for your time and we would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.